Scrapping of Declaration of Resident Status for Rajya Sabha Elections

4680. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission has received suggestions from a political party seeking scrapping of declaration of being a regular resident of the State from the prospective candidate of that State in election to Rajya Sabha as such declaration evokes nothing except lies; and

(b) whether the veracity of such statement has even been established by the Election Commission and other agencies responsible for conducting fair and honest elections to the Rajya Sabha?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Election Commission of India has received a suggestion from the President, Samata Party, for scrapping the rule regarding residental requirement for contesting Rajya Sabha election from a state, and

(b) Yes, Sir. The Election Commission has issued instructions on the subject to check malpractices. Action initiated by certain Electoral Registration Officers in the context of these instructions was challenged before certain High Courts. In one case, the proceedings initiated by the concerned Registration Officer were quashed and Election Commission's appeal to the apex court also did not succeed.

Goal of Judicial reform

4681. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-item captioned "Jethmalani vows to improve judiciary" appearing in The Hindustan Times dated the 30th March, 2000;

(b) whether it is a fact that he has himself set out a target of achieving the goal of judicial reform so as to modify the legal system within a period of two years;

(c) if so, what are Government's specific plans in this regard; and